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ROBERT F. ZENISEK
41 E. CAMPUS CT
RACINE, WI 53402

Paper No.

Application No.: 10/817,274 	Date Mailed: 03/09/2007
First Named Inventor: Zenisek, Robert, F.	Examiner: BARFIELD, ANTHONY DERRELL
Attorney Docket No.:	Art Unit: 3636
Confirmation No.: 2297	Filing Date: 04/02/2004

Please find attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Commissioner for Patents

**Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment
(37 CFR 1.121)**

Application No.
10/817,274

Applicant(s)
ZENISEK, ROBERT F.

Art Unit
2800

– The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address –

The amendment document filed on 23 February, 2007 is considered non-compliant because it has failed to meet the requirements of 37 CFR 1.121 or 1.4. In order for the amendment document to be compliant, correction of the following item(s) is required.

THE FOLLOWING MARKED (X) ITEM(S) CAUSE THE AMENDMENT DOCUMENT TO BE NON-COMPLIANT:

- ☐ 1. Amendments to the specification:
- ☐ A. Amended paragraph(s) do not include markings.
 - ☐ B. New paragraph(s) should not be underlined.
 - ☐ C. Other _____.
- ☐ 2. Abstract:
- ☐ A. Not presented on a separate sheet. 37 CFR 1.72.
 - ☐ B. Other _____.
- ☐ 3. Amendments to the drawings:
- ☐ A. The drawings are not properly identified in the top margin as "Replacement Sheet," "New Sheet," or "Annotated Sheet" as required by 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 - ☐ B. The practice of submitting proposed drawing correction has been eliminated. Replacement drawings showing amended figures, without markings, in compliance with 37 CFR 1.84 are required.
 - ☐ C. Other _____.
- ☒ 4. Amendments to the claims:
- ☐ A. A complete listing of all of the claims is not present.
 - ☐ B. The listing of claims does not include the text of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims)
 - ☐ C. Each claim has not been provided with the proper status identifier, and as such, the individual status of each claim cannot be identified. Note: the status of every claim must be indicated after its claim number by using one of the following status identifiers: (Original), (Currently amended), (Canceled), (Previously presented), (New), (Not entered), (Withdrawn) and (Withdrawn-currently amended).
 - ☐ D. The claims of this amendment paper have not been presented in ascending numerical order.
 - ☒ E. Other: Claims should be on same page not part of remark page.
- ☐ 5. Other (e.g., the amendment is unsigned or not signed in accordance with 37 CFR 1.4): For further explanation of the amendment format required by 37 CFR 1.121, see MPEP § 714.

TIME PERIODS FOR FILING A REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

1. Applicant is given **no new time period** if the non-compliant amendment is an after-final amendment or an amendment filed after allowance, or a drawing submission (only). If applicant wishes to resubmit the non-compliant after-final amendment with corrections, the **entire corrected amendment** must be resubmitted.
2. Applicant is given **one month**, or thirty (30) days, whichever is longer, from the mail date of this notice to supply the correction, if the non-compliant amendment is one of the following: a preliminary amendment, a non-final amendment (including a submission for a request for continued examination (RCE) under 37 CFR 1.114), a supplemental amendment filed within a suspension period under 37 CFR 1.103(a) or (c), and an amendment filed in response to a Quayle action. If any of above boxes 1 to 4 are checked, the correction required is only the corrected section of the non-compliant amendment in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121.

Extensions of time are available under 37 CFR 1.136(a) only if the non-compliant amendment is a non-final amendment or an amendment filed in response to a Quayle action.

Failure to timely respond to this notice will result in:

Abandonment of the application if the non-compliant amendment is a non-final amendment or an amendment filed in response to a Quayle action; or

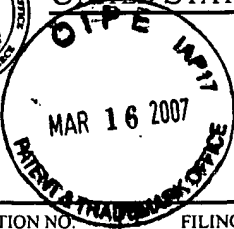
Non-entry of the amendment if the non-compliant amendment is a preliminary amendment or supplemental amendment.

Legal Instruments Examiner (LIE), if applicable Stella Little

Telephone No: 571-272-4365



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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/817,274	04/02/2004	Robert F. Zenisek		2297

7590
ROBERT F. ZENISEK
41 E. CAMPUS CT
RACINE, WI 53402

01/12/2007

EXAMINER

BARFIELD, ANTHONY DERRELL

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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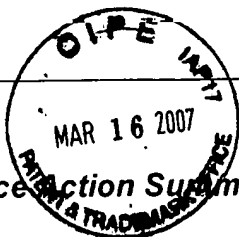
3636

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	01/12/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary



Application No.

10/817,274

Applicant(s)

ZENISEK, ROBERT F.

Examiner

Anthony D. Barfield

Art Unit

3636

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/2/04.

- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claims 1-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. In claim 1, applicant has disclosed an article of furniture in the preamble and then recites a stepped stool as the invention in the remaining claims. Applicant must clarify, i.e., "An article of furniture comprising a stepped school". In claims, 3-4, the phrase "defined in the residential building codes", renders the claims indefinite as the applicant must clarify and explicitly recite the code and year (of adoption/enforcement) in order to properly rely on such for definition.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1-8 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Santa Cruz et al. Santa Cruz et al. shows the use of an article of furniture comprising a stepped stool (10) having a pair of side frames (see Fig. 4) supporting a seat (15) and a footrest (14). The footrest is further strengthened by cross braces (20,30). Santa Cruz et al., further

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discloses that the stepped stool is made from wood, metal, plastic and with the use of screws (see col. 2, liens 30 and 59) where the footrest may be adjusted in a vertical manner depending where it is locked along the recess in the side frames.

5. Claims 1-7, and 9 as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Kneier (2002/0060491). Kneier shows the use of an article of furniture comprising a stepped stool (10) having a pair of side frames (14) supporting a seat (10) and a footrest (12). The footrest is further strengthened by cross braces (30,32). Kneier, further discloses that the stepped stool is made from wood, metal, plastic and with the use of screws (see pg. 3, paragraph 47) and includes armrests (58,60).

6. Claims 10-12 are as best understood are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Whiteside et al. Whiteside et al shows the use of an article of furniture comprising a stepped stool (10) having telescoping legs (17,24) which support a seat (51) and a footrest (29). Whiteside et al., further shows that the stepped stool is made metal, and the legs have a plurality of holes (27) and locking pins (28,31).

Conclusion

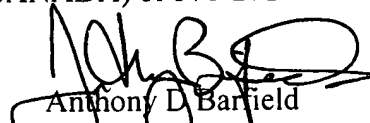
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Reference Nos. 2,658,640, 4,727,958 and 6,957,718 show features of the claimed invention.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anthony D. Barfield whose telephone number is 571-272-6852.

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The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Anthony D. Barfield
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3636

adb
January 6, 2007

**Complete if Known**

Application Number	
Filing Date	APRIL 2 2004
First Named Inventor	ROBERT F. ZENISEK
Art Unit	
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	

(Use as many sheets as necessary)

Sheet	1	of	2
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Examiner Initials*	Cite No.†	Document Number Number-Kind Code ² (Priority)	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
AB		US- 48, 638	7-11-1865	C. S. ADAMS	P2, 11-14
		US- 110, 340	12-20-1870	D. H. JAMES	P2, 14-17
		US- 155, 016	9-12-1874	M. EBERHARD	P3, 10-14
		US- 322, 792	7-21-1885	J. S. CLARK	P2, 17-19
		US- 430, 947	6-24-1890	A. B. HELLER	P4, 4-8
		US- 590, 268	9-21-1897	C. A. LEE	P2, 26-25
		US- 694, 538	3-4-1902	W. A. EDDY	P3, 14-16
		US- 1, 216, 172	2-13-1917	L. O. SCHULZ	P3, 11-14
		US- 1, 249, 882	12-11-1917	F. ARNETT	P3, 17-19
		US- 1, 505, 829	8-19-1924	H. W. WARNECKE	P3, 21-26
		US- 1, 694, 146	12-4-1928	D. S. SATTLER ET AL	P2, 25-26 P3, 1-2
		US- D139, 897	1-2-1945	R. SMITH	P3, 2-4
		US- 2, 628, 979	2-17-1953	H. M. SCHULTZ	P3, 22-26
		US- 2, 666, 210	1-19-1954	H. A. WILEY	P4, 8-11
		US- D173, 804	1-4-1955	R. GOLDMAN ET AL	P4, 11-16
	US- 3, 736, 023	5-29-1973	W. L. LYONS	P4, 16-19	
	US- 4, 377, 309	3-22-1983	H. C. MENGSHOEL	P4, 26-24	
	US- 6, 145, 931	11-14-2000	S. SUHOTIC	P4, 25-26 P5, 1-7	

[illegible]

Date Considered

EXAMINER: Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant. 1 Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). 2 See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.uspto.gov or MPEP 901.04. 3 Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). 4 For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. 5 Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.18 if possible. 6 Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

Translation is attached.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 2 hours to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

Under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it contains a valid OMB control number.

Substitute for form 1449A/PTO		Complete if Known	
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT BY APPLICANT		Application Number	
		Filing Date	APRIL 2, 2004
		First Named Inventor	ROBERT F. ZENISEK
		Art Unit	
		Examiner Name	
(Use as many sheets as necessary)		Attorney Docket Number	
Sheet	2	of	2

U. S. PATENT DOCUMENTS					
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. ¹	Document Number Number-Kind Code ² (if known)	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear
AB		US-2002/0060491	5-23-2002	A. KUGIER	P5, 8-16
		US-			
		US-			
		US-			
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FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS						
Examiner Initials*	Cite No. ¹	Foreign Patent Document Country Code ³ Number ⁴ Kind Code ⁵ (if known)	Publication Date MM-DD-YYYY	Name of Patentee or Applicant of Cited Document	Pages, Columns, Lines, Where Relevant Passages or Relevant Figures Appear	T ⁶

Examiner Signature		Date Considered	11/6/07
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*EXAMINER Initial if reference considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609. Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant. ¹ Applicant's unique citation designation number (optional). ² See Kinds Codes of USPTO Patent Documents at www.uspto.gov or MPEP 901.04. ³ Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴ For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵ Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST.18 if possible. ⁶ Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language translation is attached.

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 2 hours to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450. DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

If you need assistance in completing the form, call 1-800-PTO-9199 and select option 2.

Notice of References Cited



Application/Control No.

10/817,274

Applicant(s)/Patent Under

Reexamination

ZENISEK, ROBERT F.

Examiner

Anthony D. Barfield

Art Unit

3636

Page 1 of 1

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Name	Classification
*	A	US-6,378,720 B1	04-2002	Santa Cruz et al.	182/91
*	B	US-6,957,718 B1	10-2005	Whiteside et al.	182/129X
*	C	US-4,727,958	03-1988	Botello, Roger N.	182/15
*	D	US-2,658,640	11-1953	BAYLES DONALD C	182/129
	E	US-			
	F	US-			
	G	US-			
	H	US-			
	I	US-			
	J	US-			
	K	US-			
	L	US-			
	M	US-			

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Document Number Country Code-Number-Kind Code	Date MM-YYYY	Country	Name	Classification
	N					
	O					
	P					
	Q					
	R					
	S					
	T					

NON-PATENT DOCUMENTS

*		Include as applicable: Author, Title Date, Publisher, Edition or Volume, Pertinent Pages)
	U	
	V	
	W	
	X	

*A copy of this reference is not being furnished with this Office action. (See MPEP § 707.05(a).)
Dates in MM-YYYY format are publication dates. Classifications may be US or foreign

[0023] FIG. 4 is a side view in elevation of an alternative embodiment of the invention allowing for the vertical adjustments of both the seat and the footrest.

[0024] FIG. 5 is a view of the front of the alternative embodiment of the invention when taken along line 5-5 of FIG. 4.

[0025] FIG. 6 is a view of the back of the alternative embodiment of the invention when taken along line 6-6 of FIG. 4.

[0026] FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a typical front brace used in the invention.

[0027] FIG. 8 is a plan view of a typical back brace used in the invention.

[0028] FIG. 9 is a plan view of the footrest adjusting support used on the adjustable embodiment of the invention.

[0029] FIG. 10 is a plan view of the seat adjusting support used on the adjustable embodiment of the invention.

[0030] FIG. 11 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

~~[0031] FIG. 12 is a perspective view of an alternative embodiment of the invention using metal telescoping legs.~~

REFERENCE NUMBERS IN THE DRAWINGS

- [0032] 10 Seat of stepped stool.
- [0033] 11 Footrest of stepped stool.
- [0034] 12 Left side frame member.
- [0035] 13 Right side frame member.
- [0036] 14 Typical front brace.
- [0037] 15 Typical back brace.
- [0038] 16 Left side adjustable frame member.
- [0039] 17 Right side adjustable frame member.
- [0040] 18 Footrest adjustable support.
- [0041] 19 Seat adjustable support.
- [0042] 20 Fasteners.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0043] Referring to the drawings, FIG. 1 is a side view of the preferred embodiment of the stepped stool where the seat 10 is mounted to the top horizontal portion of the left side frame member 12 and the footrest 11 is mounted to the lower horizontal portion of the left side frame member 12 and the front brace 14 and back brace 15 are attached to the side frame member 12.

[0044] FIG. 2 is a front view of the preferred embodiment where seat 10 is mounted to the top of both the left side frame member 12 and right side frame member 13 and footrest 11 is shown attached the lower horizontal portion of both the left side member 12 and the right side member 13 and with the front brace 14 and the back brace 15 also attached to both side members 12 and 13.

[0045] FIG. 3 is a back view of the preferred embodiment where the seat 10 and footrest 11 are mounted to the side

frames 12 and 13 and the front brace 14 and back brace 15 are also mounted to the side frames 12 and 13.

[0046] FIG. 4 is a side view of an alternate embodiment of the stepped stool that provides a means for vertical adjustment of both the seat 10 and footrest 11. Here, the seat 10 is attached to the seat adjustable support 19 which is attached to the left side adjustable frame member 16 by fasteners 20. The footrest 11 is attached to the footrest adjustable support 18 which in turn is attached to the left side adjustable frame member 16 by fasteners 20.

[0047] FIG. 5 is a cross sectional view taken along line 5-5 of FIG. 4. Here it can be seen how the footrest adjustable supports 18 are attached to the footrest 11 and to both the left side adjustable frame member 16 and the right side adjustable frame member 17 with the fasteners 20. Also shown is the how the front brace 14 is attached to the side frame members 16 and 17 so as not to interfere with the vertical adjustment of the footrest adjustable supports 18 and the footrest 11.

[0048] FIG. 6 is a cross sectional view taken along line 6-6 of FIG. 4. Here it can be see how the seat adjustable supports 19 are attached to the seat 10 and to the left side adjustable frame member 16 and the right side adjustable frame member 17 with fasteners 20 and how the back brace 15 is positioned not to interfere with the adjustable seat supports 19 and the seat 10.

I claim:

1. An article of furniture, a stepped stool, with seat and footrest specifically designed to assist persons in the act of putting on and taking off their shoes and socks.

2. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 consisting of a pair of side frames, both a right hand one and a left hand one, supporting said seat and said footrest and having the necessary crosses braces to ensure said stepped stool its strength and stability.

3. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 where said seat and said footrest are positioned on said side frames such that their vertical dimensions from the base of said side frames shall be such to emulate the dimensions of the vertical rise of two steps of a normal staircase as defined in the residential building codes.

4. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 where width of said footrest is to emulate that of a normal stair tread and said seat is to emulate the width of two said stair threads as defined in said residential building codes.

5. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 wherein said footrest and said seat may have rounded edges or may be padded for comfort using typical upholstery materials and techniques.

6. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 wherein said side frames, said seat, said footrest and said braces may be made of wood, both hard or soft, plastic or any metal or any other substance which would provide the necessary strength and stability to support any person of above average weight.

7. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 whereas it may be manufactured using screws, bolts, Tee nuts and Cross bolts in such a manner to allow said stepped stool to be supplied to the consumer in an unassembled condition for ease of packing and shipping.

8. The said side frames as set forth in claim 2 where the said side frames may be constructed in such a manner to

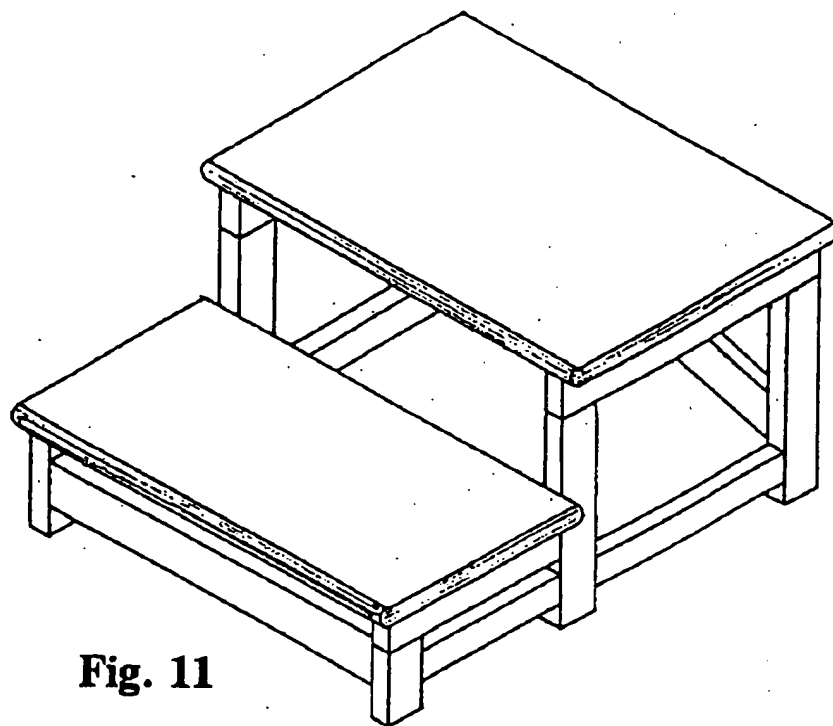


Fig. 11

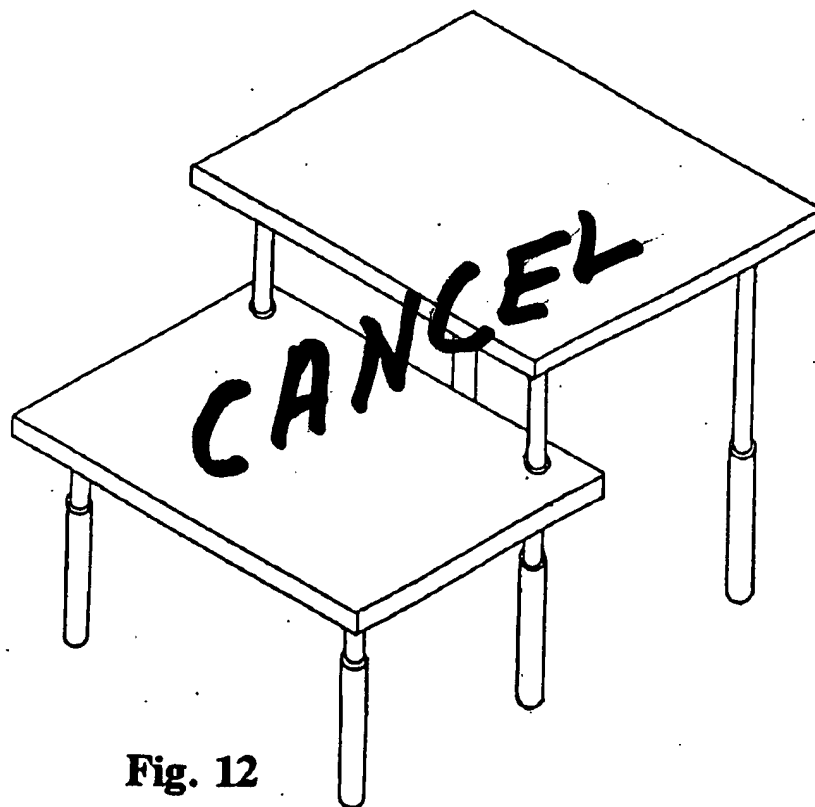


Fig. 12



US006378720B1

(12) **United States Patent**
Santa Cruz et al.

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 6,378,720 B1**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Apr. 30, 2002**

(54) **COMBINATION TRASH RECEPTACLE AND STEP STOOL**

(56) **References Cited**

(76) **Inventors:** **Cathy D. Santa Cruz**, 7630 Tholl Dr., Reno, NV (US) 89506; **Stan Gittelman**, P.O. Box 2106, Carson City, NV (US) 89721

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2,658,640 A * 11/1953 Bayles 182/129
4,846,304 A * 7/1989 Rasmussen 182/129
5,967,255 A * 10/1999 Young 182/91

(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

* cited by examiner

Primary Examiner—Stephen Castellano

(21) **Appl. No.:** **09/912,507**

(22) **Filed:** **Jul. 23, 2001**

(51) **Int. Cl.⁷** **B65F 1/14**

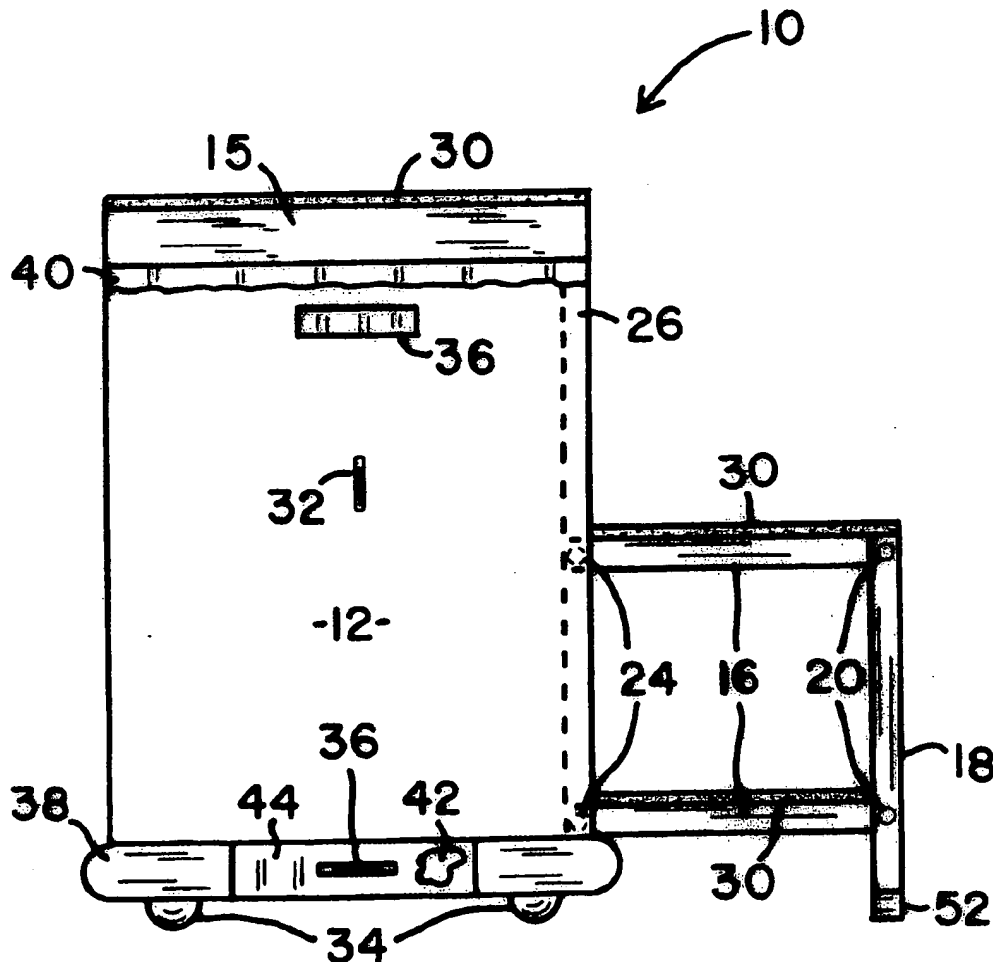
(52) **U.S. Cl.** **220/495.06; 182/91; 220/908**

(58) **Field of Search** **220/908, 720, 220/890, 495.06, 495.07, 23.86, 23.83, 23.87, 23.91; 182/91, 156, 129, 33**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

The present invention provides a new and unusual combination trash receptacle and step stool, which is portable, compact, safe, and includes a novel storage compartment and garbage bag installation means.

9 Claims, 2 Drawing Sheets



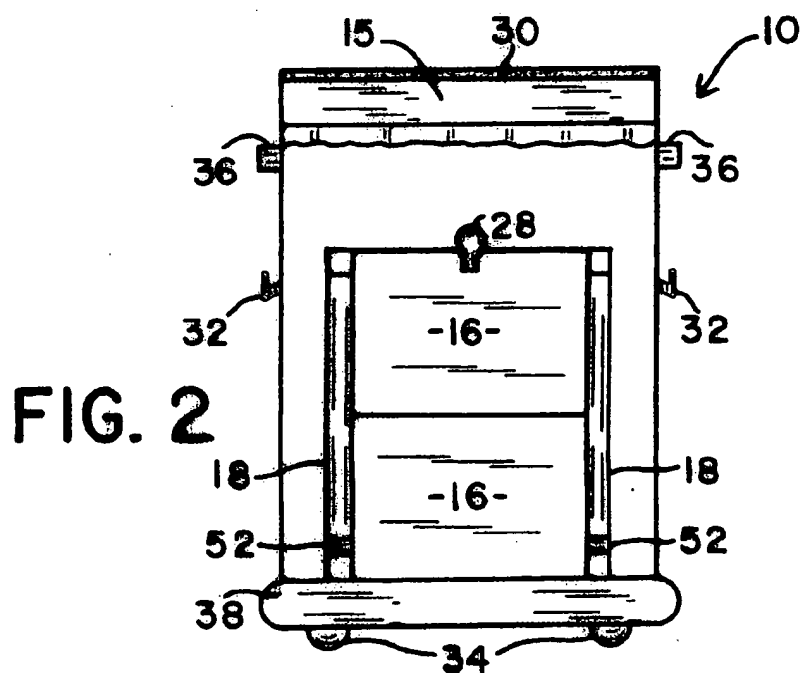
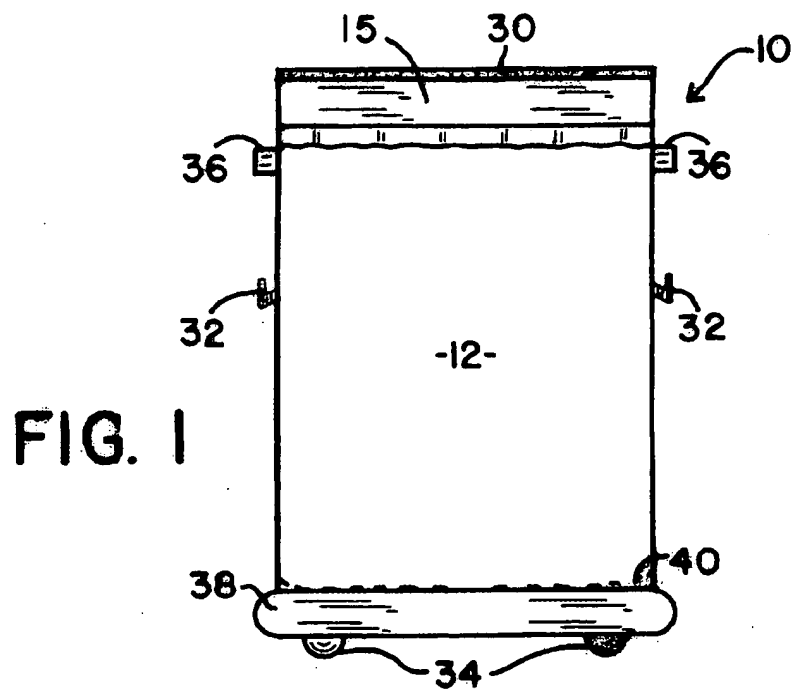


FIG. 3

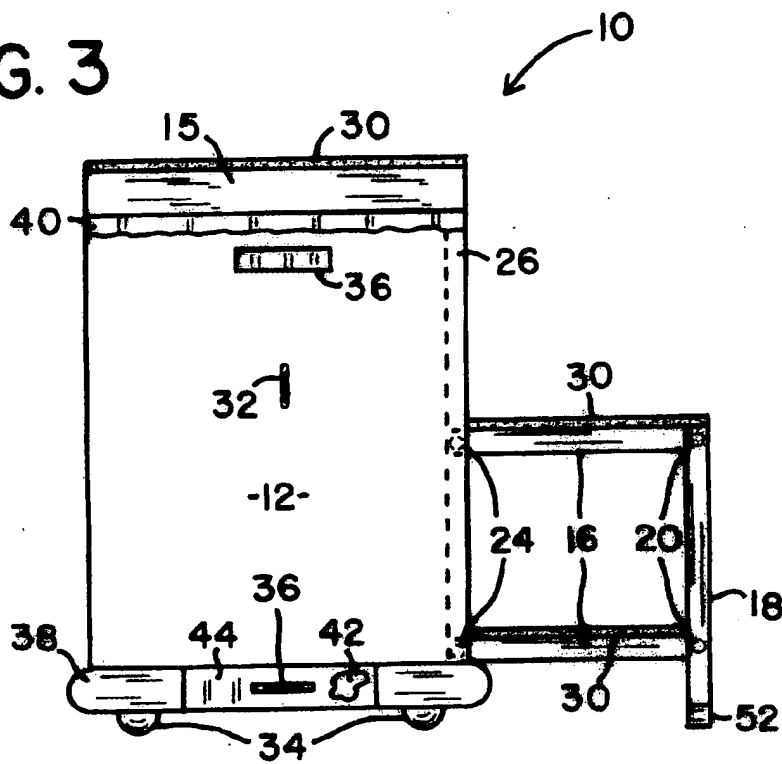
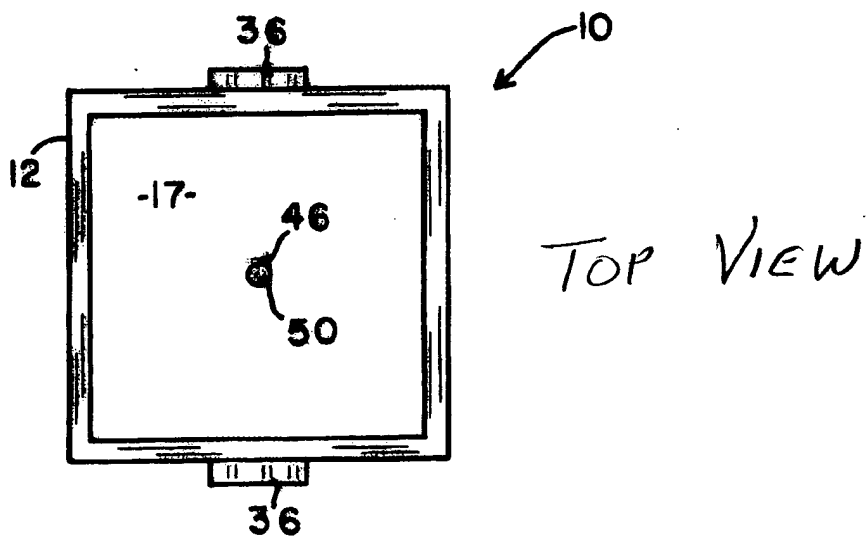


FIG. 4



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COMBINATION TRASH RECEPTACLE AND
STEP STOOL

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates to trash containers in general but more particularly pertains to a trash receptacle having a step stool therewith, and when the stool is not in use it can be conveniently folded into a retracted position, yet it is easily accessible when needed for use. Also, the receptacle includes unique retrieval means for inserting a garbage bag therein.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

In the past, there have been many types of trash containers and various types of step stools. However, nowhere in the prior art did the applicants find a combination of both, which would be most useful and novel as this allows a user quick access to the step stool as well as the trash container.

It is well known that most people position their trash containers in a convenient location for easy disposal, such as within the kitchen area, etc. Most often in such locations, the user has a need for use of a step stool which would allow for quick access to items located in high cabinets, or the like. Therefore, the applicants contend there is a great need for a trash container that includes an easy access step stool therewith, with the step stool being conveniently retracted when not in use yet easily accessible when needed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool which is of a shape and size so as to be conveniently positioned within an area of user choice, and allows the user to easily dispose of trash as well as provides a step stool for easy access to items when needed.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool which is economical to produce and manufacture from any suitable material of engineering choice, such as plastic, wood, aluminum, etc. and which is of a sufficient strength to support an adult when standing thereon.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool that includes a lid having a non-slip treated surface, so as to eliminate the possibility of the user slipping and having an accident.

Also a further object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool which includes various attachment means for removably attaching items of user choice onto the container, such as dish-towels, dust-rags, a dust-pan, a whisk broom, or the like.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool which includes a storage compartment for containment of typical plastic garbage bags, which can be either stored individually, on a roll, or within a box or the like.

A very important object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool having internal and external access to the above noted compartment. As the internal access allows the user to easily grasp one of the garbage bags from the inside of the container and position it for use, all in one step that is simple, easy, convenient and clean, and the external access allows the user to easily replace the garbage bags when needed.

Yet another object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool having handles

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and locking casters which allow the user to easily move and position the trash receptacle into the desired location, and secure it in place.

Still another object of the present invention is to provide a combination trash receptacle and step stool which may include an odor control insert therewith, and a compartment for containment thereof.

Other objects and advantages will be seen when taken into consideration with the following drawings and specification.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is substantially a front side view of the preferred embodiment for the present invention.

FIG. 2 is substantially a back side view of the preferred embodiment for the present invention.

FIG. 3 is substantially a side view of the preferred embodiment for the present invention.

FIG. 4 is substantially a top view of the preferred embodiment for the present invention with the lid removed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Referring now in detail to the drawings wherein like characters refer to like elements throughout the various views. It is to be understood the present invention as depicted herein is only exemplary of one suitable embodiment, as the invention can be made in any suitable shape or size or from any suitable material of engineering choice, such as plastic, rubber, wood, aluminum, metal, etc.

As depicted throughout the views 1-4, the present invention is substantially a combination trash receptacle and step stool represented by overview (10), with the receptacle (12) being substantially formed from a front wall, a rear wall, a right side wall, a left side wall a bottom, and a lid (15). It is to be understood each wall with bottom and lid in combination form an internal compartment (17) which is used for containment of trash (not shown).

With the step stool (14) being substantially formed from at least one step (16) having at least one support leg (18) which is hingedly pivotably attached by hinge means (20).

It is to be understood that multiple steps (16), and multiple support legs (18) may be used as well as any other suitable type of hinge means (20) of engineering choice.

It can now be seen that step stool (14) has a retracted closed position as depicted in FIG. 2 and detracted open position as depicted in FIG. 3.

It is to be further understood that various attachment means may be used for attaching step stool (14) onto receptacle (12). Thus the following is only exemplary of one possible attachment means. Wherein step (16) is pivotably attached to an attachment bracket (22) by suitable pivot means such as pivot pin (24), with attachment bracket (22) being suitably fixedly mounted onto receptacle (12) at the desired location. For example, at least one of the side walls either the right side or left side, includes a recessed cavity (26) and attachment bracket (22) is fixedly secured therein, such as by screws (not shown) or the like. Also, the last noted side wall further includes a locking mechanism (28) for securing step stool (14) onto the noted side wall when step stool (14) is in its retracted closed position. Recessed cavity (26) is of a shape and size to receive step stool (14) therein when step stool (14) is in the noted retracted closed position. Whereby, it can clearly be seen when step stool (14) is in its retracted closed position it is held in a flush manner within recessed cavity (26).

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It is to be further understood lid (15) may be of any suitable lid construction of engineering choice, for example lid (15) may be hingedly attached and spring loaded so as to automatically open when pressed upon. Or the lid (15) may be simply frictionally engaged, etc.

However, the applicants feel it is very important that lid (15), step (16), and support leg (18) each include a non-slip surface. Again, any means for providing a non-slip surface can be implemented, such as a sprayed on coating, a roughened irregular surface, etc. Or as the applicants prefer, a rubberized material (30), is most suitable for lid (15) and step (16), and rubberized foot pads (52) are most suitable for support leg (18).

Other features are to include hooks (32) which can be used for multiple purposes of user choice, such as for hanging a dust rag, a bucket, a whisk broom and dust pan, towels, or the like.

Also, another important feature is to provide locking casters (34). Again any suitable type of locking casters may be used according to engineering choice. Thus, the general construction and properties of the casters (34) are not described herein as there are numerous types of suitable casters in the known prior art.

Yet another feature may be to include handles (36) which allow the user to easily move receptacle (12) from one location to another. Again, handles of any type may be used, such as recessed, protruding, rectangular, or even of ergonomic design, etc.

A very important and novel feature is to include an internal concealed compartment (38) which can be used for containment of any article of user choice, such as either individual garbage bags (40), rolled garbage bags, or a box of garbage bags, etc. and concealed compartment (38) includes an opening (42) with reusable closure means, such as an access door (44) which allows for easy replacement of either individual garbage bags (40), rolled garbage bags, or a box of garbage bags. Most importantly, the concealed compartment (38) includes a hole (46) which is in open communication with internal compartment (17) of trash receptacle (12). Whereby, one of the garbage bags (40) can be easily grasped by the user and simply pulled up through hole (46) and then positioned into place within trash receptacle (12). Also, if desired hole (46) may further include a reusable closure means of engineering choice, such as a plug (50) which allows the user to easily seal off hole (46), such as when a garbage bag is not in use.

It can now be seen we have herein provided a new and novel combination trash receptacle and step stool which is portable, compact, is of simple construction, and includes unique features heretofore not taught within the known prior art.

Although the invention has been herein shown and described in what is conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiment, it is recognized that departures may be made there from within the scope and spirit of the

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invention, which is not to be limited to the details disclosed herein but is to be accorded to the full scope of the claims so as to embrace any and all equivalent devices and apparatuses.

Having described the invention what we claim as new and wish to secure by Letters Patent is:

1. A trash receptacle and step stool in combination comprising: a front wall; a rear wall; a right side wall; a left side wall; a bottom; a lid; and a step stool; each said wall with said bottom and said lid in combination form an internal compartment, said step stool being formed from at least one step having at least one hingedly pivotably attached support leg, said step stool having a retracted closed position and a detracted open position, said step being pivotably attached to an attachment bracket, at least one said side wall having a recessed cavity for receiving said step stool therein when said step stool is in said retracted closed position, said at least one said side wall having a locking mechanism for securing said step stool onto said at least one said side wall when said step stool is in said retracted closed position, and said attachment bracket being fixedly secured within said recessed cavity,

whereby:

said step stool when in said retracted closed position is held in a flush manner within said recessed cavity.

2. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 1 further includes said lid and said step each having a non-slip surface.

3. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 1 further includes hooks.

4. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 1 further includes locking casters.

5. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 1 further includes handles.

6. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 1 further includes an internal concealed compartment for containment of either individual garbage bags, rolled garbage bags, or a box of garbage bags.

7. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 6 further includes said internal concealed compartment having an opening with closure means for easy replacement of either said garbage bags, rolled garbage bags, or a box of garbage bags.

8. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 6 further includes said internal concealed compartment having a hole which is in open communication with said internal compartment of said trash receptacle,

whereby;

one of said garbage bags can be easily grasped and pulled through said hole and then positioned into place within said trash receptacle.

9. The trash receptacle and step stool of claim 8 further includes said hole having reusable closure means.

* * * * *

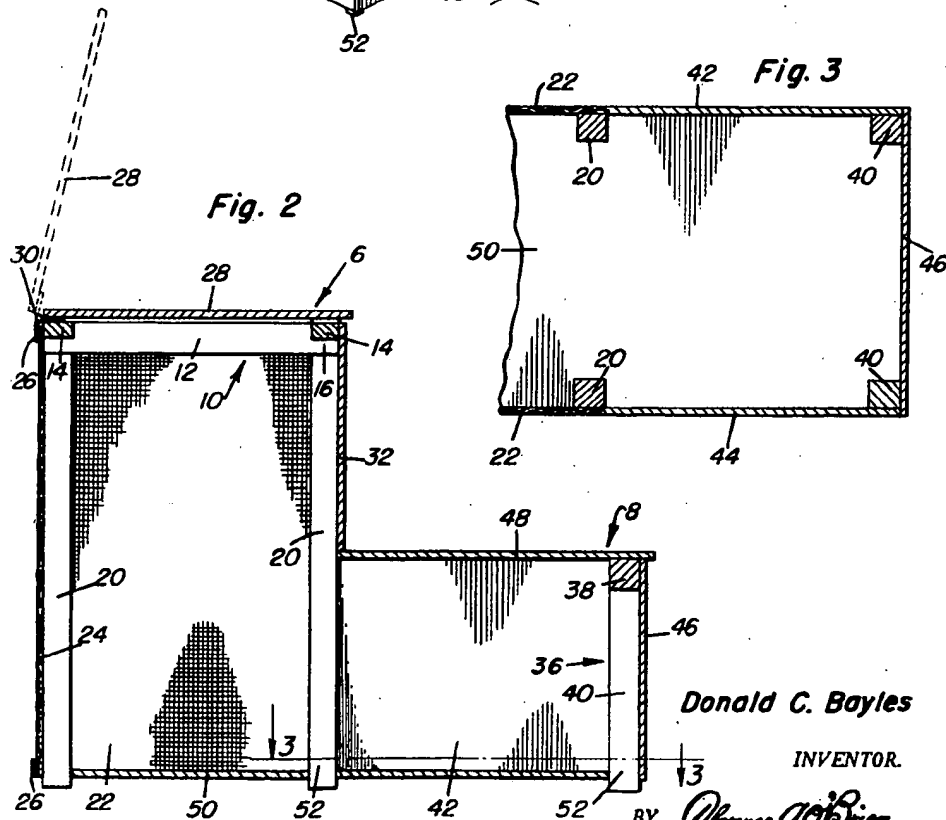
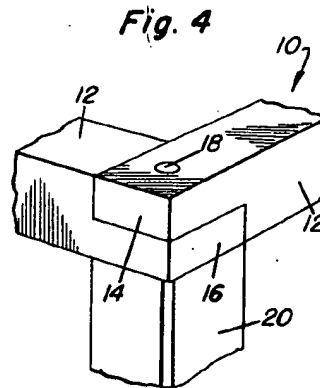
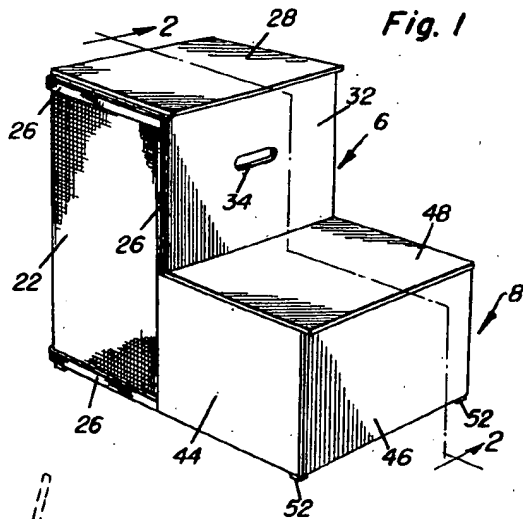
Nov. 10, 1953

D. C. BAYLES

2,658,640

CHILDREN'S HAMPER WITH STEPS COMBINED

Filed July 17, 1950



Donald C. Bayles

INVENTOR.

BY *Chance A. Brown*
and *Harvey B. Jackson*
Attorneys

UNITED STATES PATENT OFFICE

2,658,640

CHILDREN'S HAMPER WITH STEPS
COMBINEDDonald C. Bayles, Adams, Wis., assignor of forty-
nine per cent to Robert H. Soucek, Friend-
ship, Wis.

Application July 17, 1950, Serial No. 174,165

1 Claim. (Cl. 217-5)

1

The present invention relates to certain new and useful improvements in clothes hampers and has more particular reference to a relatively small light-weight portable hamper which is expressly adapted for use by children in the home, said hamper being individual in character not only because of its miniature proportions but novel in that it embodies upper and lower treads functioning as steps.

More specifically, the invention has to do with a novel and practical hamper which serves as a container for small and miscellaneous garments and similar little things, and which, due to the fact that it has steps, functions as a so-called step stool.

The obvious objective of the invention is to provide a combination hamper and step stool for children to enable them to help themselves when at a lavatory or sink, to enable them to safely climb in and out of bed and to provide handy storage space for articles that have to be picked up and momentarily put away from time to time.

Another object is to provide the aforementioned combination hamper and step stool which has a convenient hand hole in a front wall and which, though light in weight, is sturdy. It may be picked up and carried about by a youngster, placed near the sink to enable him to get a drink of water, placed adjacent to a wash basin to enable him to wash his face and hands and which is sufficiently reliable that it may be employed by the housewife to conveniently obtain access to articles on elevated cabinet shelves in the kitchen and elsewhere.

Briefly summarized, the combination device comprises a wicker or equivalent ventilated hamper which is small and of low elevation and wherein the lid thereof constitutes an upper step. The front wall of the hamper constitutes a kick-board and is provided with a hand hole for convenient carrying purposes. Attached to and projecting outwardly from the so-called kick-board is a box-like hollow extension, forming a part of the hamper but primarily serving as a low or approach step, whereby to thus provide a hamper with high and low steps to be used in the manner stated.

Other objects and advantages will become more readily apparent from the following description and the accompanying illustrative drawings.

In the accompanying sheet of drawings, wherein like numerals are employed to designate like parts throughout the views;

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Figure 1 is a perspective view of a combination hamper and step stool constructed in accordance with the principles of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a view on an enlarged scale, taken approximately on the plane of the irregular vertical line 2-2 of Figure 1, looking in the direction of the arrows;

Figure 3 is a horizontal section on the line 3-3 of Figure 2; and

Figure 4 is a fragmentary perspective view of the upper frame of the framework.

Referring now to the drawing by way of numerals and accompanying lead lines, the part of the structure denoted by the numeral 6 constitutes the hamper proper, whereas the component or part denoted by the numeral 8 constitutes the extension or approach step. The latter is sometimes referred to as a riser.

The hamper part is characterized interiorly by a framework. The framework embodies a horizontal top frame 10 made up of suitable frame members 12 having their end portions suitably notched, overlapped as at 14 and 16 (see Figure 4) and glued and fastened together as at 18. The uprights or legs, there being four of these, are denoted by the numerals 20. The two side walls 22-22 are of suitable wicker material and are joined by a rear wicker wall 24. These substantially enclose the framework in an obvious fashion and are attached thereto by customary braided strips 26. The top wall is a solid wooden panel 28 and this is hingedly mounted on the top frame as at 30 and functions, obviously, as a lid, on the one hand, and as a top or upper step, on the other hand. The front half-wall is denoted at 32 and this is fastened to the front member of the top frame 10 and to the upper portions of the legs 20. It provides a kick-board and is provided with a hand hole 34, whereby the entire structure may be picked up and carried about conveniently. There is a U-frame of an inverted type 36 which constitutes the essential interior construction for the extension step 8. This is relatively low and includes a horizontal cross-piece 38 and vertical legs 40. This is closed in by two solid wooden or equivalent side walls 42 and 44 and a front drop wall 46. There is in addition a horizontal top panel or wall 48 and this is fastened to the frame member 38 and rests on the upper edges of the walls 42, 44 and 46. It is suitably fastened in place and underlies the lower edge of the half-wall 32. It serves to enclose the frame 36 and also to provide a box-like auxiliary re-

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ceptacle for the main hamper or receptacle. Primarily, however, it is a low or approach step for the user.

The bottom is a single panel or wall 50 and this is attached to all of the legs 20 and 40 and is suitably notched to cooperate with the legs and is slightly elevated above the legs so that the extending lower portions of the legs constitute supporting feet 52 which may be suitably levelled in an obvious manner.

The two-way combination structure herein disclosed and described constitutes a unique piece of furniture which provides the facilities of a hamper, on the one hand, and a step stool, on the other hand. It is felt that the construction employed is one in which manufacturers and users will find their essential needs fully met, contained and successfully available.

In view of the foregoing description taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, it is believed that a clear understanding of the device will be quite apparent to those skilled in this art. A more detailed description is accordingly deemed unnecessary.

It is to be understood, however, that even though there is herein shown and described a preferred embodiment of the invention, the same is susceptible to certain changes fully comprehended by the spirit of the invention as herein described and within the scope of the appended claim.

Having described the invention, what is claimed as new is:

For use by children, a light-weight portable step-stool having a clothes hamper incorporated therein and forming a part thereof, said step-stool being unobstructedly hollow throughout and comprising a main framework embodying a horizontal top frame, vertical supporting legs attached at their upper ends to the corner portions of and depending from said frame, said legs being spaced apart, a one-piece bottom having marginal edge portions joined to and interconnecting the lower portions of said vertical legs, a portion of said bottom projecting at right angles

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beyond two of said vertical legs, an inverted U-shaped frame of a height appreciably less than the height of said main framework, said U-shaped frame having a horizontal cross-piece and vertical legs, the lower ends of said legs being joined with marginal edge portions of said bottom and said cross-piece being on a plane well below the plane of the top frame, said bottom having its edges notched to receive said vertical legs with the legs projecting below the plane of said bottom as feet, said U-shaped frame being spaced beyond said main frame, ventilated rear and side vertical walls enclosing said main framework and attached to cooperating ones of said vertical legs, solid front and side walls attached to and enclosing said U-shaped frame with said side walls attached to lower half portions of two of the adjacent vertical legs, a solid horizontal top wall mounted on the cross-piece of said U-shaped frame and having its marginal edge portions seated on the upper edge portions of said solid front and side walls, a solid lid hinged on and covering said horizontal top frame, and a vertical front wall attached to the upper portions of the front legs of said main framework and having its lower end resting on the adjacent inner end portion of said horizontal top wall and also having a hand-hole therein.

DONALD C. BAYLES.

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(19) **United States**

(12) **Patent Application Publication**
Kneier

(10) **Pub. No.: US 2005/0218709 A1**

(43) **Pub. Date: Oct. 6, 2005**

(54) **CHAIR WITH ATTACHED FOOTREST FOR
PUTTING ON AND REMOVING FOOTWEAR**

Publication Classification

(51) **Int. Cl.⁷ A47C 7/50**

(52) **U.S. Cl. 297/423.1**

(76) **Inventor: Andrew William Kneier, Nevada City,
CA (US)**

(57) **ABSTRACT**

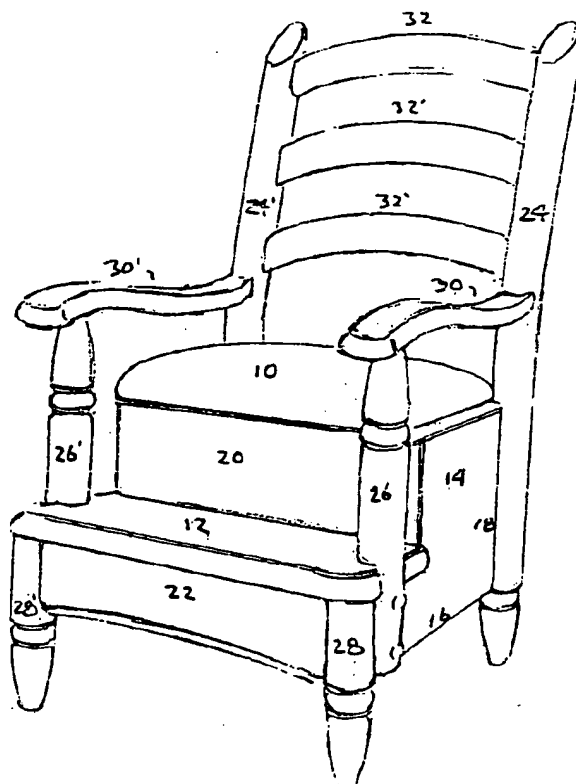
Correspondence Address:
Andrew W. Kneier
265 Giles Street
Nevada City, CA 95959 (US)

A chair with back and arms, adapted for putting on and removing footwear, wherein the seat is located approximately twenty-two inches above the local grade and wherein the arms extend approximately twenty-two inches from the back; consisting also of a stationary, outwardly extending, and attached footrest approximately eight inches below the seat. The chair may further have a storage compartment formed beneath the seat.

(21) **Appl. No.: 10/814,739**

(22) **Filed: Apr. 1, 2004**

**Chair with Attached Footrest for
Putting on and Removing Footwear**



Chair with Attached Footrest for Putting on and Removing Footwear

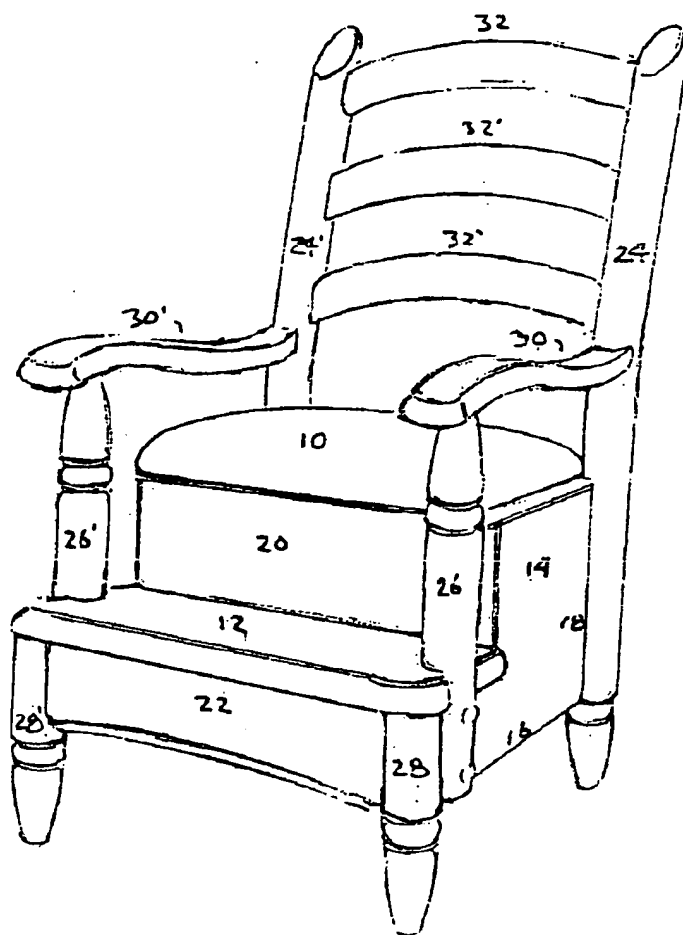


Figure 1



US007036887B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Kneier(10) **Patent No.:** **US 7,036,887 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **May 2, 2006**(54) **CHAIR WITH ATTACHED FOOTREST FOR
PUTTING ON AND REMOVING FOOTWEAR**(76) **Inventor:** **Andrew William Kneier**, 265 Giles St.,
Nevada City, CA (US) 95959(*) **Notice:** Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this
patent is extended or adjusted under 35
U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.(21) **Appl. No.:** **10/814,739**(22) **Filed:** **Apr. 1, 2004**(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2005/0218709 A1 Oct. 6, 2005

(51) **Int. Cl.**
A47C 7/62 (2006.01)
A47C 1/12 (2006.01)(52) **U.S. Cl.** **297/446.1; 297/188.1**(58) **Field of Classification Search** **297/446.1,**
297/423.1, 188.1, 153, 188.09, 188.08, 188.11;
182/91

See application file for complete search history.

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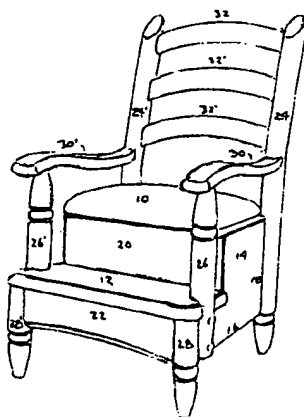
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Primary Examiner—Peter M. Cuomo*Assistant Examiner*—Sarah B. McPartlin(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm*—Arthur J. Carlson(57) **ABSTRACT**

A chair with back and arms, adapted for putting on and removing footwear, wherein the seat is located approximately twenty-two inches above the local grade and wherein the arms extend approximately twenty-two inches from the back; consisting also of a stationary, outwardly extending, and attached footrest approximately eight inches below the seat. The chair may further have a storage compartment formed beneath the seat.

4 Claims, 1 Drawing Sheet**Chair with Attached Footrest for
Putting on and Removing Footwear**

Chair with Attached Footrest for
Putting on and Removing Footwear

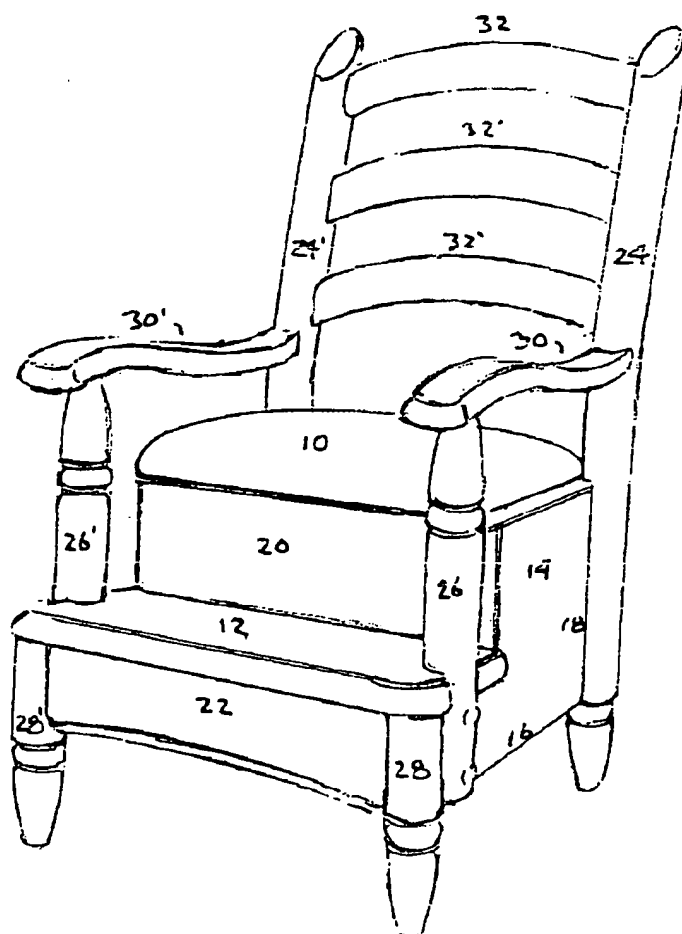


Figure 1

I claim:



1. An article of furniture comprising a stepped stool, with seat and footrest specifically designed to assist seniors and other persons with mobility problems in their knees, legs or back in the act of putting on and taking off their shoes and socks.
2. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 consisting of a pair of side frames, both a right hand one and a left hand one, supporting said seat and said footrest and having the necessary cross braces to ensure said stepped stool its strength and stability.
3. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 where said seat and said footrest are positioned such that their vertical dimensions from the base of said side frames shall be such to emulate the dimensions of the vertical rise of two steps of a normal staircase found in the average multistory residential building.
4. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 where depth of said footrest is to emulate that of a normal stair tread and said seat is to emulate the depth of two said normal stair threads found in said normal staircase in said average multistory residential building.
5. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 wherein said footrest and said seat may have rounded edges or may be padded for comfort using typical upholstery materials and techniques.
6. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 wherein said side frames, said seat, said footrest and said braces may be made of any substance which would provide the necessary strength and stability to support any person of above average weight
7. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 1 whereas it shall be manufactured in such a manner to allow said step stool to be supplied to the consumer in an unassembled condition for

ease of packing and shipping and be easily assembled by said consumer with supplied common fasteners to ensure its strength and rigidity.

8. The said stepped stool as set forth in claim 2 where the said side frames may be constructed in such a manner to allow said footrest and said seat to be adjusted in a vertical manner.

9. The said side frames as set forth in claim 2 wherein the said side frames are manufactured in such a manner to provide for the inclusion of arm rests which are attached to said frames and extend to a comfortable height above said seat and provide a stable holding surface which the occupant of said stepped stool may use to assist them in sitting and rising from said stepped stool.

10. A stepped stool with a seat and footrest specifically designed to assist seniors and other persons with limited mobility in their knees, back or legs in the act of putting on and taking off their shoes and socks where the heights and depths of said seat and said footrest emulate that of a single stair in a normal staircase rising to a landing in an average multistoried residential house.

*I know these are not
required. However, I
put them in just
in case someone wants
to look at them in
the final form. Dump
them if you like.*

R. F. Jensen